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PATENT



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Applicants: STEFAN BONEBERG ET AL.

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Title: TANK FOR A CARBON- AND HYDROGEN- CONTAINED FLUID

REPLY

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Commissioner for Patents  
Washington, D.C. 20231

Sir:

This Reply is being filed in response to the Office Action originally dated December 21, 2001 (Paper No. 8).

It should be noted that the period for responding to the Office Action was reset by the decision mailed March 14, 2002 (Paper No. 10), and presently expires on March 26, 2002.

Please amend claims 1 and 14 as follows. A marked-up version of claims 1 and 14 showing the changes made is included at the end of this Reply.

1. (Amended) A tank for receiving a carbon- and hydrogen-containing fluid for supplying a fuel cell system with an operating medium, comprising:

at least one straining means for cleaning the fluid arranged between the inlet and the outlet.

14. (Amended) A method for cleaning a carbon- and hydrogen-containing fluid comprising feeding the fluid through a tank having at least one straining means for cleaning the fluid arranged between an inlet and an outlet, thereby removing at least one constituent.

Please add new claims 19-26 as follows:

--19. A tank according to Claim 8, wherein the metal oxide is selected from the group consisting of  $\text{SiO}_2$ ,  $\text{MgO}$ , and  $\text{ZnO}$ .

20. A method according to Claim 14, wherein the straining means comprises at least one zone having regions of different permeability for constituents of the carbon- and hydrogen-containing fluid.

21. A method according to Claim 14, wherein the constituent is selected from the group consisting of flame colorants, coloring agents, and odor-imparting agents.

22. A method according to Claim 14, comprising filtering

23. A method according to Claim 20, further comprising filtering alcohols, ketones, esters, and dimethyl ether.

24. A method according to Claim 21, further comprising filtering sulfur compounds.

25. A method according to Claim 23, further comprising removing chlorine or chlorine-containing compounds.

26. A fuel cell vehicle according to Claim 17, wherein the tank is a component of the fuel cell vehicle selected from the group consisting of a reformer, CO oxidator, and heat exchanger.--